



OPINION *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

Daylight Saving Time

Add Topic

A healthier, safer America is without daylight savings time | Opinion

John Michael Pierobon Your Turn

Published 9:36 a.m. ET March 7, 2025

America should end daylight saving time (DST) and adopt permanent standard time for health, safety, economic, and environmental reasons.

Hundreds of scientific studies link the seasonal clock change due to DST to persistent misalignment of body clocks, and increased rates of heart attacks, traffic accidents, cancer, diabetes, obesity, depression, and suicide attempts.

A University of Alabama at Birmingham study found that the risk of a heart attack increases 10% on the Monday and Tuesday following the spring time change. The risk of having a stroke goes up 8% during the first two days after the beginning of DST, according to one Finnish study. And in a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, Italian researchers concluded there was a "significant increase in the risk of AMI [Acute Myocardial Infarction] following DST transitions, that was particularly noticeable after the spring DST shift." These findings support ending DST.

Sleep experts agree. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine believes "the U.S. should eliminate seasonal time changes in favor of a national, fixed, year-round time." Members cite an "abundance of accumulated evidence" supporting the adoption of year-round standard time because it "aligns best with human circadian biology and provides distinct benefits for public health and safety."

Using a large database of 732,835 fatal motor vehicle accidents (MVA) recorded from 1996 to 2017, a 2019 study found a 6% increase in fatal MVA risk during the week following the spring forward transition to DST, which was more pronounced in the morning and in the western part of each time zone.

Need a break? [Play the USA TODAY Daily Crossword Puzzle.](#)

According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), the transition into daylight saving time results in a 10% increase in traffic accidents during the first week following the time change. This increase in accidents can be attributed to the disrupted sleep patterns, impaired alertness, and the sudden shift in the time-of-day people are driving.

Another study, published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, stated the shift to DST correlates with an increase in workplace injuries, placing "employees in clear and present danger." Workers are more likely to make mistakes due to sleep disruption, which can result in serious accidents.

DST may have saved energy 50 years ago, but the opposite is true today.

An early goal of DST was to reduce evening usage of incandescent lighting. The federal government has phased out production of incandescent light bulbs.

Researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara, conducted a study after Indiana adopted DST in 2006. They found adopting DST resulted in an increase in energy consumption. "We estimate a cost of increased electricity bills to Indiana households of \$9 million per year." They estimated social costs of increased pollution emissions to be in the millions of dollars, and "the effect is likely to be even stronger in other regions of the United States."

Other studies find DST is actually increasing energy consumption because Americans are moving to warmer climates. DST causes Americans to use more air conditioning.

Permanent DST is not a solution. Russia tried year-round DST in 2011 and moved to permanent standard time in 2014. America tried permanent DST in the past and it failed. Congress implemented year-round DST because of the 1973 oil embargo. It was abandoned after just one year.

Permanent DST was unpopular then, and it is unpopular now.

The National PTA also opposes permanent DST, citing the safety risks for children heading to school in the dark.

Make America healthy again. Tell Congress it is time to stop tinkering with our clocks and adopt a healthier, safer, and more efficient time system that reflects the natural rhythms of the world around us.

John Michael Pierobon is an engineer and a public health advocate who lives in Fort Lauderdale.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Send letters to the editor (up to 200 words) or Your Turn columns (about 500 words) to letters@tallahassee.com. Please include your address for verification purposes only, and if you send a Your Turn, also include a photo and 1-2 line bio of yourself. You can also submit anonymous Zing!s at Tallahassee.com/Zing. Submissions are published on a space-available basis. All submissions may be edited for content, clarity and length, and may also be published by any part of the USA TODAY NETWORK.

